

# CONGREGATION SHAAREY ZEDEK

MONTHLY BULLETIN

JANUARY 2026  
TEVET - SHEVAT 5786

**Stronger  
Together** ♥

ט"ב

## LANSING JEWISH UNITY LUNCH

Join us for an afternoon of Jewish unity and Tu B'Shevat celebration. All ages welcome - we will have special activities for the children.

Please RSVP to  
[lansingjewishfederation@gmail.com](mailto:lansingjewishfederation@gmail.com)  
to ensure enough food and seating.

**Sunday, February 1, 2026**  
**14 Shevat 5786**

**From 1:00 - 2:30 PM**

**Hannah Community Center**  
**819 Abbot Rd.**  
**East Lansing, MI 48823**

SPONSORED BY THE  
MITTLEMAN FAMILY

Chabad Greater Lansing/MSU  
Kehillat Israel  
Greater Lansing Jewish Federation

MSU Hillel  
Shaarey Zedek



## *A Letter from Rabbi Bigman*

### WELCOMING THE STRANGER

## How the Jewish Community Must Support Refugees in Lansing

Thirty-six is an important number in Judaism:  $2 \times 18$ . With the number 18 representing life (*chai*), the number 36 represents "double life." So it is significant that 36 times in the *Torah* we learn how to treat the stranger, the one who resides in our land. Why must we do so? Because we know what it was like to be strangers:

Exodus 23:9 "You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt."

Leviticus 19:33-34 "When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not wrong him. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."

Rabbi Yossi Sapirman, formerly of Beth Torah Congregation in Toronto, Ontario, Canada notes that

The *Torah* of Moses is a story of immigration. From the earliest human movement as refugees from Eden to the final eulogy of Moses in which the Exodus is noted as the highpoint of his life's work, biblical humanity tells of people unsettled, unarrived and tenuously connected to "home." [<https://journeys.uscj.org/strangers-in-land-of-egypt/>]

Judaism is quite clear: We are called upon to protect the stranger/newcomer who resides with us, which today includes refugees. Given the government's cutbacks, the situation today is very difficult. Refugee Services, part of Catholic Charities of Ingham, Eaton & Clinton Counties, shares that funds previously were available to provide newcomer rental assistance up to \$600 per family per month for one year. The family covered the remainder. These funds are no longer available.

**The Interfaith Clergy Association of Greater Lansing is planning a fundraiser to help subsidize rent;** however, this fundraiser won't be held until April (date to be determined). In the meantime, funds are desperately needed. Please join me in this *mitzvah*!

Online: [CatholicCharitiesIEC.org](https://CatholicCharitiesIEC.org)  
(type "Refugee Services Rental Assistance" in the comment section)

By check: Catholic Charities at 2800 W. Willow St., Lansing, MI 48917  
(mark "Refugee Services Rental Assistance" in the memo line)

We will be holding our annual **Refugee Shabbat** at Congregation Kehillat Israel on March 7 at 10 a.m. We hope to have a speaker from Refugee Services join us that morning. Please check upcoming bulletins and weekly e-mails for details as they become available.

Remember, we were strangers in Egypt. Since we are settled in our land, it is now up to us to help our neighbors. Thank you!

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

JOANNE GILBERT



During these cold, dark days of the year, it is easy to allow the torpor of winter to set in as for many of us, hibernation becomes both appealing and habitual. But in the spirit of *Chanukah*, which means dedication, we must rededicate ourselves to our congregational community. We can do this in two important ways: 1) We can show up by volunteering for the many committees and initiatives necessary to keep our synagogue running, and 2) we can contribute much-needed financial support to help our congregation keep the lights on, quite literally by defraying overwhelming utility costs, as well as allowing us to remunerate our staff appropriately.

As I have previously noted, we are in a period of discernment as we navigate both rabbinic and administrative transitions. And although change is always anxiety-provoking, it also presents a unique opportunity for growth. Right now, we are trying to determine whether we can afford a new full-time rabbi upon the retirement of Rabbi Bigman in 2027. As we work on a budget for the next fiscal year, we are mindful that with our current financial resources, we may not be able to do so.

The good news is that we can change this situation; we can increase our revenue through member contributions. This means we either need more members or we need our current members to contribute more. The better news is that thanks to the expertise of our member, **Michael McNamara**, our website now has a “Donate” button. If everybody donates something, it truly helps us move forward.

So please ask yourself: “Am I giving all that I can to my congregation?” Perhaps you have been intending to make a donation, but life just got in the way. Maybe you would like to honor someone by donating to a particular fund. Please do everything you are able to help our congregation so that we can continue to thrive and provide all that you need and expect.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please contact me or any member of the board. As I have said before, you are the lifeblood of our congregational community, and we are grateful beyond measure for your membership.

## HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

**The Shaarey Zedek office will be closed on January 1 and 2.**



### REWARDS PROGRAM



Do you shop at Kroger? Save money on your purchases and help our synagogue! Simply login to:

[www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com) to sign up. You need your Plus card and our congregation's code— 84431. A percentage of your purchases will be donated to Shaarey Zedek-at no cost to you. Thank you for your support!

## MAZAL TOV!

Jessica Sender and John Roberts on their marriage on December 7.

## Oneg Sponsors



January 2 – No *Oneg*

January 9 – Bonnie/Dick Radway, Celiarose/Ken Varner, Roslyn Covey

January 16 – Judith/Paul Zack, Karen Brown, Elizabeth Campbell-Schrody/Patrick Schrody

January 23 – Junis Zumberg, Renee Zumberg, Terry Zumberg, Lily/Russ Brown, Vicki Brown

January 30 - Sisterhood

## ADDRESS CHANGE

Ethel and John Anthony  
4805 N. Powell Meadows Lane  
Okemos, MI 48864

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to my Shaarey Zedek family and friends who supported our Sisterhood and honored me on my birthday with a *Simchagram*. I am grateful for your thoughtfulness and kindness. Thank you to our Sisterhood for the *Chanukah* gift. I am grateful for the support and friendship of this wonderful group and appreciate the love, joy and laughter that is shared with all.  
- Patty Warshaw

## PRAYERS OF HEALING

are sent to:

Art Cherkinsky, Jane Finn, Joan Gray, Susi Greiner, Celia Guro, Carol Horowitz, Alon Kalay, Terry Selman, Courtney Vincent, Carolyn Zohott

# *Celebrating 107 Extraordinary Years:* HONORING ESTHER MORRISON



Our community has the rare honor of celebrating a truly remarkable milestone. On January 4, 2026, Esther Morrison will turn 107 years old—a blessing not only in years, but in the extraordinary life, spirit, and legacy that accompany them.

Born in Detroit in 1919, Esther's life story reflects strength, resilience, love, and unwavering dedication to Jewish life. Esther was accepted to the University of Illinois and had even joined a sorority there, but a transferred school credit prevented her attendance. Instead, she carved her own meaningful path. Earlier in life she worked as a bookkeeper, and after her marriage devoted herself completely to volunteerism and community service.

Esther married Justin Morrison, the love of her life, and together they shared 52½ beautiful years. They built a loving family that remains her greatest joy—three children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren, all of whom adore her and cherish her wisdom, warmth, and humor.

In 1940, Esther and Justin made Shaarey Zedek their spiritual home, and that same year Esther joined Sisterhood, where she became a pillar of commitment and leadership. She served as Vice President of Sisterhood, always ready to step forward when needed. Known for rolling up her sleeves and getting involved, Esther helped each year with the beloved Smorgasbord, chaired the Sunday School program, and proudly served as the first President of Women's *B'nai B'rith* in Lansing—an accomplishment that helped secure a house for MSU Hillel, strengthening Jewish student life for generations to come.

To Esther, Sisterhood mattered deeply—not only as part of the heart of Shaarey Zedek, but because its support made Sunday School education possible, helping ensure the continuity of Jewish learning and tradition.

Today, at nearly 107, Esther continues to be thought of with love, admiration, and gratitude—especially from her Shaarey Zedek family in East Lansing. She remains a source of inspiration through her grace, dedication, and the beautiful life of service she has led.

Please join us in wishing *Mazal Tov* to Esther Morrison on her 107th birthday. May she continue to be blessed with good health, joy, and the warmth of the family and community who love her so dearly.



Esther & Justin in 1949 (age 30)

## OUR FIRST BLOOD DRIVE WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS!

At the request of the American Red Cross, we hosted a blood drive on Wednesday, December 3. Thank you to **Elissa George** for coordinating this important event. Twenty-eight people, many of whom were first-time donors, donated 22 units of blood! Watch the bulletin for future blood drives.



**American  
Red Cross**

Shaarey Zedek and Kehillat Israel's

# Soup-er *Shabbat*

Friday, February 6 | Dinner 6:15 p.m.

*Shabbat* Worship 7 p.m.



Please join us at Congregation Shaarey Zedek for a  
soup dinner and worship jointly led by  
Rabbi Amy Bigman and Rabbi Matthew Kaufman.

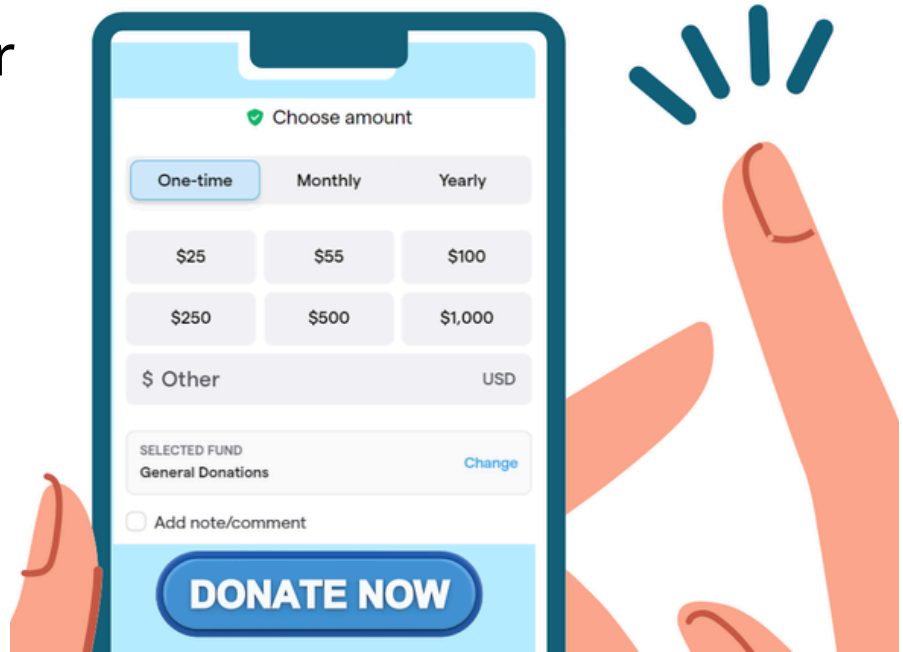
Cost: Cans of soup for the Greater Lansing Food Bank

Attire: Wear your jeans and t-shirts/sweatshirts that support your  
favorite NFL/College/High School team

RSVP REQUIRED SO WE HAVE ENOUGH FOOD. Call or text Carol  
at 410-0535 by February 4.

# Our Website Now has a Donate Button!

You can now send your contribution online in just a few clicks. Visit **ShaareyZedek.com** and click "Donate." Thank you for your generosity!



Poverty. Climate change. Racial justice. LGBTQ+ equality. Human rights. Tikkun Olam. What does Judaism teach us about creating a just society? Once a month, through June, we will take a one-hour "study break" to learn about an aspect of social justice in Jewish texts.

All classes are Mondays at 3 p.m. ET. Free and open to all! Offered on a suggested contribution basis. Shaarey Zedek is pleased to co-sponsor this series in conjunction with LAASOK.

## The Torah of Reparations *Slavery, Justice & Repair in Jewish Texts*

**Monday, January 12**  
**3pm Eastern on Zoom**  
**With Jordan Berg Powers**



 <p><b>The Torah of Reparations</b> Jordan Berg Powers January 12, 2026</p>	 <p><b>Jewish Responses to Climate Change</b> Rabbi Glenn Jacob February 2, 2026</p>
 <p><b>Speaking Up to Power: Learning From Esther</b> Rabbi Laura Rappaport March 2, 2026</p>	 <p><b>What We Leave for the Poor</b> Rabbi Barry Block April 20, 2026</p>
 <p><b>The Right to Live, The Right to Die</b> Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild May 11, 2026</p>	 <p><b>Protecting LGBTQ+ Rights: A Jewish View</b> Rabbi Micah Buck June 8, 2026</p>

Register at <https://LAASOK.org/current-offerings/#justice>

## BIRTHDAYS

4	Esther Morrison
4	Samantha Kamer
5	Michael Ranieri
5	Noah Elia
6	Morgan Vincent
10	Lynn Spoon
11	Joanne Guertin
11	Betsy Hull
14	Matthew Cohen
15	Lisa Craig
16	Doug Batchelder
17	Sarah Marks
18	Roy Saper
19	Sue Weiss
19	Seren Delaney
20	Alon Kalay
21	Jeffrey Olds
21	Valerie Levitt
24	Renee Zumberg
26	Mary Danowitz
26	Ron Weinstein
29	Juliet Feinberg
29	Jennifer (Ruben) Zillins
29	Evan Cohen
31	Edward Oxer

## ANNIVERSARIES

8	Jason and Christine Pikstein
26	Micah and Razi Lissy



יום הולדת שמח!  
(HAPPY BIRTHDAY)





## Upcoming Special Dates and Programs at SZRS

- **Winter Break** continues through the first week of January.
- **Wednesday, January 7** first day back for 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> graders
- **Sunday, January 11** first day back for *Gan*, *Alef-Bet* and *Tichon* (8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders)
- **Sunday, January 18** Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Day of Service and Learning at SZRS (MiT meets)
- **Sunday, February 1** *Tu Bishvat* at SZRS (MiT meets)
- **Sunday, February 15** NO SZRS: Presidents' Day Weekend

## School Committee Meeting

Our School Committee meetings are generally open to any member of the congregation. If you would like to attend, please email Gabriel Elia for the Zoom link. Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 15 at 7:00 p.m.

## Lifelong Learning News

Thank you so much to the participants of *Midrash* & Mayhem. Over the last three years, we have learned so much about *Torah*, text, interpretation and each other. I am so grateful for you and the learning we have done together.

Dear Shaarey Zedek,

It has been my great honor to serve you as Director of Congregational Lifelong Learning over the past six plus years. It has been a joy to work closely with so many of you, to get to know you and your families, and to be part of your educational Jewish journey. Please know that even though I am leaving this role, I am not leaving the community, and I am only an email or text away! 😊

You can always reach me at [mvalles@jewishpluralism.org](mailto:mvalles@jewishpluralism.org) or you can text me at (616) 737-1732 or my number as listed in the Shaarey Zedek Sisterhood Directory. Please stay in touch! I am excited that Naomi will be stepping into this role. She is brilliant, kind, strong and responsible. She has strengths that will help us grow and shift in the ways we need at this moment in time. I couldn't be more pleased for our school community, our larger community, and my own family (my daughter is in 4<sup>th</sup> grade).

All the best,

Margot B. Valles



**JOIN MAH JONGG  
FUN!**

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS  
PROVIDED.  
EVERYONE WELCOME!

**Every Sunday starting  
January 11 through  
February 15**

**2:00 - 4:00 p.m.  
FREE**

**Davis Family Social Hall**

**LEARN  
HOW TO  
PLAY!**

**OPEN  
PLAY!**

RSVP to Roslyn Covey at [roslyncovey@att.net](mailto:roslyncovey@att.net)

Indicate if it's for lessons or open play, and list the dates you'll attend.

**TREASURER  
NEEDED!**

If you're looking for a way to get involved with Sisterhood and enjoy working with numbers, please consider volunteering to be our next treasurer! Send us a message at [SisterhoodShalomSZ@gmail.com](mailto:SisterhoodShalomSZ@gmail.com) and let's talk about it!

Everyone is invited to attend Sisterhood meetings. You do not need to be a member of Sisterhood to attend but this is where we do our planning for exciting events.

**Our next meeting is January 5 at 6:30 p.m. at Shaarey Zedek.**

# GIFTS, HONORS AND MEMORIALS

We are grateful for your generous contributions to our designated funds, this enables the congregation to offer services and programs that would not otherwise be available.

While donations of any amount are welcomed, a minimum donation of \$18 will be required in order to receive a listing in the "Bulletin" and acknowledgment to a recipient. This policy applies to these funds:

- Altman Family Building Fund
- Bette Sue Rittman All Children Are Special Fund
- Bubbe Lynn Rycus Beautification Fund
- Cantor Pamela Schiffer Caring Community Fund
- David and Carrol Kahn Cultural Fund
- Esther and Justin Morrison Fund
- Ethel Wolfe Kitchen Fund
- Henry Fine and Annette Fine Burke Library Fund
- Joseph & Jeanette Lutvak Fund
- Joseph and Mable Meites Educational Fund
- Landscape Fund
- GLTY Fund
- Marvin and Maureen Gladstone Technology Fund
- Planned Giving Fund
- Prayer Book Fund
- Rabbi Morton and Aviva Hoffman Tzedakah Fund
- Sophie Radway Memorial PJ Library Fund
- YES Fund

Also included are these funds. Please make separate checks payable to these funds:

- Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund
- Marvin and Maureen Gladstone Flower and Social Engagement Fund
- Ruth E. Rome Endowed Music Fund
- Florence Rudman Education Fund
- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Shapiro Religious School Endowment Fund
- CSZ Endowment Fund
- L' Dor Vador Fund



## ALTMAN FAMILY BUILDING FUND

In honor of Marlene and Burt Altman  
Frances Lichtman

In memory of Rita Rudman, mother of Ken Rudman  
Ken and Mary Marton

A generous donation was received from Marlene and Burt Altman in honor of their family

## CANTOR PAMELA SCHIFFER CARING COMMUNITY FUND

In honor of Patty Warshaw on her birthday  
Aviva Panush

## ESTHER AND JUSTIN MORRISON FUND

In honor of the birthdays of Sarah Marks and Jeff Olds  
Esther Morrison

## GENERAL FUND

A generous donation was received from Judy Minkin in honor and thanks to: Margot and Maya Valles, Patty and Lauren Warshaw, Kelly Feinberg, Amy Shapiro

A generous donation was received from Michael McNamara

A generous donation was received from Matt Aldridge

A generous donation was received from Joanne Gilbert

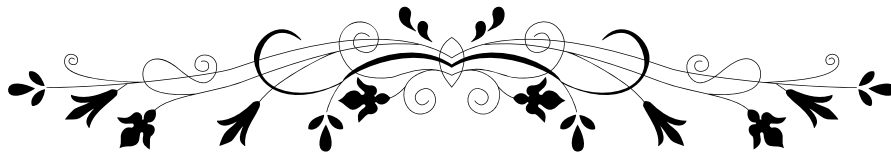
## JOSEPH AND MABLE MEITES EDUCATIONAL FUND

In honor of Naomi Glogower as she begins as Shaarey Zedek Religious School Director; In honor of Margot Valles for her guidance as Director of Congregational Lifelong Learning. *B'hatzlacha* to both in their new pursuits.  
Aviva Panush

## SOPHIE RADWAY MEMORIAL PJ LIBRARY FUND

In memory of David and Sophie Radway; Ronald and Lila Radway  
Bonnie, Dick and Andy Radway

# YAHRTZEITS



## January 2

Marcia Bayles  
Harry Gershen  
Lillian Horowitz  
Sarah Levine  
Josepf Rittman  
Edward Schwartz  
Marilyn Soifer  
Harold Soffin  
Jerry Weisberg



## January 9

Barbara Anderson  
Donald Baron  
Annette Fine Burke  
Lois Crawford  
Thomas Falcsik  
David Hecht  
Rebecca Hecht  
Abe Kamins  
Ruth Kositchek  
Viva Irene Lowe  
Abraham Polukoff  
David Radway  
Ron Radway  
Sophie Radway  
Lila Radway  
Lillian Richmond  
Bill Russell  
Esther Schiffer  
Morton Siet  
Cecilia Struze  
Betty Tannenbaum  
Royalyn Vert  
Ilene Wolfe



## January 16

Sally Baron  
Bruce Billies  
Lillian Busch  
Thelma Cohen  
James Gouin  
Lilly Greenberg  
Wilbert Hines, Jr.  
Lois Cone Lurie  
Al Meadows  
Ralph Robinson  
Rosemarie Sender  
Larry Thompson  
Jay Werber  
Anna Zidell



## January 23

Norman Abeles  
Lee Abramson  
Esther Berman  
Archie Crego  
Marvin Engel  
Harry Fine  
Elizabeth Gouin  
Maier Simon Levine  
Dick Ormos  
Rachel Price  
Jeanette Schafer  
Bella Schlissberg  
Kay Shapiro  
Howard Soifer

## January 30

John Blakelee  
James Carson Bowler  
Paul Eisenberg  
Leo Goldner  
Benjamin Albert Levine  
Ethel Lindner  
Abraham Marks  
Faylene Owen  
Matilda Post  
Frank Selman  
Ida Shanker  
Jack Shanker  
Pearl Shiovitz  
Marvin Soifer  
Bertha Wegner  
Alan Zohott

**CONDOLENCES** are sent to

Ken Rudman on the death of his mother, Rita Rudman, on November 25.

Congregation Shaarey Zedek  
1924 Coolidge Road  
East Lansing, MI 48823

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## Worship Schedule

Friday, January 2 -- *Shabbat* Evening Worship, 6 p.m.

Friday, January 9 — Shaarey Zedek Live! Worship, 6 p.m.

Friday, January 16 -- *Shabbat* Evening Worship, including *Torah* reading, 7 p.m.

Friday, January 23 -- *Shabbat* Evening Worship, 7 p.m.

Friday, January 30 -- *Shabbat* Evening Worship, 7 p.m.